

**A series of technical assistance
manuals for community coalitions**

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STRATEGIZER[®]

**WORKING TOGETHER,
BUILDING SAFE AND
HEALTHY COMMUNITIES:**

**COMMUNITY CAPACITY
DEVELOPMENT OFFICE/
WEED AND SEED INITIATIVE AND
COMMUNITY ANTI-DRUG COALITIONS**



Working Together, Building Safe and Healthy Communities: Community Capacity Development Office/Weed and Seed Initiative and Community Anti-Drug Coalitions

*Developed by CADCA in cooperation with the U.S. Department
of Justice, Community Capacity Development Office*

“Community Takes Action Against Guns in Downtown, Buffalo, NY”

“Team effort shuts down gambling houses on Pine Bluff’s north side...”

*“Youth Substance Abuse & Violent Crime Declining in Battle Creek, MI
Substance Abuse/Crime Prevention Coalitions Behind Success”*

“Revitalized: People, agencies making a difference in West Ocala...”

INTRODUCTION

The successes in these headlines are based on coordination and cooperation across the systems and organizations that address community problems. In short, community coalitions, comprised of parents, teachers, law enforcement officials, businesses, religious leaders, health providers and other community activists, are mobilized at the local level to make their communities safer, healthier and drug-free.

There are many different types of coalitions that address substance abuse and other community challenges. Some have singular goals and objectives, i.e., preventing underage drinking by mobilizing school systems and creating safe havens for young people. Others have goals that are more comprehensive and inter-related—for example, reducing the number of guns, substance abuse and gang violence by involving the community, engaging businesses and ensuring that substance abuse treatment programs are accessible. Regardless, research shows that by connecting multiple sectors of the community in a comprehensive approach, community coalitions are achieving real outcomes in reducing substance abuse, violence prevention and increasing community revitalization. Creating partnerships is a smart strategy that promotes coordination and collaboration, and makes efficient use of limited community resources. It also provides a way to forge new alliances, advocate for change and support lasting community health.

Coalition financial sustainability is critical in order for long-term community change to be achieved. While coalitions may be familiar with their own funding sources, they may not be as knowledgeable about other forms of funding. As such, while coalitions acquire a variety of funding, this *Strategizer*:

1. Introduces the two major coalition funding sources offered by the federal government—the Drug Free Communities Support Program, through the Office of National Drug Control Policy, administered by the Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration/Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (SAMHSA/CSAP) and Weed and Seed, administered by the U.S. Department of Justice’s Community Capacity Development Office (CCDO) and provides information on program goals and objectives, eligibility requirements, the funding application process and quick tips—facts that can be used to create stronger applications.
2. Reviews the similarities and differences between the two funding sources in terms of goals and objectives, audience, program oversight, program parameters and performance measures.
3. Provides four examples of coalitions that are using both sources of funding.
4. Offers next steps and additional resources.

WHAT IS THE DRUG-FREE COMMUNITIES SUPPORT PROGRAM?

The Drug-Free Communities Support Program (DFCSP) provides grants to coalitions that mobilize their communities to prevent youth substance abuse.

Since 1998, over 700 DFCSP grants have been awarded. The sites represent a cross-section of projects from every region in the nation, and include programs in rural, urban, suburban and tribal communities. Please see the Drug-Free Community Support Program Web page at: <http://drugfreecommunities.samhsa.gov/grantee/grantees.html> for a complete list of DFCSP sites.

Goals and Objectives

DFCSP aims to:

1. Reduce substance abuse among youth and, over time, among adults by addressing the factors in a community that increase the risk of substance abuse and promoting the factors that minimize the risk of substance abuse. (Substances include, but are not limited to: narcotics, depressants, stimulants, hallucinogens, marijuana, inhalants, alcohol and tobacco, where their use is prohibited by federal, state or local law.)
2. Establish and strengthen collaboration among communities, private nonprofit agencies, and federal, state, local and tribal governments to support the efforts of community coalitions to prevent and reduce substance abuse among youth.

The grants enable coalitions to strengthen their coordination and prevention efforts; encourage citizen participation in substance abuse reduction efforts; and disseminate information about effective programs.

Eligibility Requirements

The key element of the Drug-Free Communities Support Program is the community coalition. Specific requirements must be met in order for an organization to apply for funding. The coalition must:

- ✓ Be an organization eligible to apply for a grant or must make arrangements with an eligible organization that can serve as a fiscal agent.
- ✓ Have the reduction of substance abuse among youth as a principal mission. This must be clearly stated in the coalition's formal mission statement.
- ✓ Have goals and objectives that target multiple drug use. Also addressed should be the two major goals of the Drug-Free Communities Support Program.
- ✓ Demonstrate that its members have worked together on substance abuse prevention/reduc-

tion initiatives for no less than six months before submitting its application.

- ✓ Demonstrate that it has substantial involvement and participation from its membership, as well as from other volunteer community leaders. The coalition must function as a unique entity, and must be more than a group of agency and organization representatives or a board of directors of a direct service delivery organization.
- ✓ Have representation from the targeted community, and include at least one member/representative from each of the following 12 sectors:
 - Youth (meaning young persons themselves, not an adult representing youth)
 - Parents
 - Business community
 - Media
 - Schools
 - Youth-serving organizations
 - Law enforcement agencies
 - Religious or fraternal organizations
 - Civic and volunteer groups
 - Healthcare professionals
 - State, local, and/or tribal governmental agencies with expertise in the field of substance abuse (including, if applicable, the state agency with primary authority for addressing substance abuse)
 - Other organizations involved in reducing substance abuse

Funding Application Process

1. The funding cycle for DFCSP awards is from October 1 – September 30. Coalitions are eligible to receive funds for up to five years, and must complete a continuation application for years two-five. Approximately 200 new awards are granted each year.
2. Grant announcements are released in the winter and funding proposals are due after that time. Solicitation announcements are found online at <http://drugfreecommunities.samhsa.gov/history/dffaq.html>.



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Quick Tips

- ✓ *(Grant application)* Grant applicants must provide a dollar-for-dollar match for the funds requested. Federal funds, including federal funds passed through a state or local government, cannot be used as the dollar-for-dollar match, except in the case of a tribal government.
- ✓ *(Grant application)* Applicants must present a detailed plan for evaluating the overall work and accomplishments of the coalition. This plan should include process and outcome indicators.

- ✓ *(Funding opportunity)* Another funding source to consider is the DFCSP Coalition Mentoring Program, which funds experienced, successful DFCSP grantees to support and encourage the development of new, or expansion of existing, community anti-drug coalitions. Applicants may propose to assist one or more communities in efforts to begin coalition operations or to expand or strengthen the operations of coalitions that want to receive such assistance. Funding is available for a 12-month period. See <http://drugfreecommunities.samhsa.gov/history/dffaq.html> for details.

WHAT IS WEED AND SEED?

Weed and Seed is a U.S. Department of Justice community-based initiative. The program consists of an innovative and comprehensive multi-agency approach to law enforcement, crime prevention and community revitalization. Weed and Seed sites range in size from several neighborhood blocks to 15 square miles, and most have populations of about 20,000. There are over 300 current Weed and Seed sites. Please see the Community Capacity Development Office Web page at: www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ccdo/neighborhood.htm for a complete list of Weed and Seed sites.

Goals and Objectives

Weed and Seed is foremost a strategy rather than a grant program—which aims to prevent, control and reduce violent crime, drug abuse and gang activity in targeted, high-crime neighborhoods. This goal is accomplished in two ways:

1. Law enforcement agencies and prosecutors take the lead in weeding out criminals who commit violent crime and drug abuse, attempting to prevent their return to a targeted neighborhood.
2. Seeding activities bring prevention, intervention, treatment and neighborhood revitalization to the specified area.

All Weed and Seed programs have the following elements:

1. **Weeding:** Consists of enforcement, adjudication, prosecution and supervision efforts that target

and apprehend violent street criminals. Activities include repeat or violent offender apprehension programs; intensified narcotics investigations; targeted prosecutions; victim-witness protection programs; and eliminating narcotics trafficking organizations.

2. **Community Policing:** Includes the increased presence of foot patrols and mini-police stations; victim referrals to support services; and community relations programs. Communities also organize citizen marches, rallies and prayer services and create drug-free zones and graffiti removal/neighborhood beautification projects.
3. **Seeding:** Consists of the development and integration of youth services, school programs, community and social programs and support groups that enhance positive community attitudes toward combating narcotics and other drug use and trafficking. Seeding usually begins with the near completion of the intensive weed activities. Depending on the needs, interests and most importantly, the safety of a targeted neighborhood, these strategies are sometimes concurrently launched with weeding efforts.
4. **Community revitalization:** Focuses on improving living conditions; enhancing home security; developing long-term efforts to renovate and maintain housing; supporting economic growth and development and low-cost physical improvements to a community; and providing educational, social, recreational and other community-specific oppor-

tunities that foster self-worth, responsibility and pride in one's community.

Eligibility Requirements

Weed and Seed sites must receive Official Recognition to obtain federal funds, participate in federally-sponsored training and technical assistance and use the official Weed and Seed logo. Here's how to obtain Official Recognition:

1. *Notify the U.S. Attorney's Office:* A community that is interested in becoming a Weed and Seed site must first notify the U.S. Attorney's office in its district of the intent to develop a Weed and Seed Strategy—a tactical plan for crime reduction and neighborhood revitalization.
2. *Organize and Convene a Steering Committee:* A Steering Committee directs the oversight and management of the program, from goals and objectives through evaluation. The U.S. Attorney plays a central role in organizing the Steering Committee, bringing together its members at each site. This individual also facilitates coordination of federal, state and local law enforcement efforts. The Steering Committee must include:
 - U.S. Attorney's Office
 - Community residents
 - City/County government
 - Local law enforcement

In addition, the Steering Committee may include, but is not limited to representatives of:

- District Attorney's Office
- State/federal law enforcement agencies
- Social service agencies
- Non-profit and community-based organizations
- Regional directors of federal departments and agencies (HUD, HHS, Small Business Administration, etc.)
- Private business owners and corporations operating in the target area
- Faith-based organizations
- Housing organizations
- Departments of parks and recreation and other city agencies (housing, code enforcement, etc.)
- Tenant or block associations
- Employment and training agencies

- School administrators, teachers, and the school superintendent
- Community outreach staff

3. *Develop a Weed and Seed strategy and implementation plan that must include:*

- Selecting the target neighborhood
- Conducting a needs assessment for the target neighborhood
- Selecting existing resources and creating new ones
- Developing a strategy that includes goals, objectives, outcome measures and implementation plans for each of the four Weed and Seed focus areas: law enforcement, community policing, prevention, intervention/treatment and community renovation.

4. *In late spring, Official Recognition Guidelines are posted on the CCDO web site:* Note the following deadlines and requirements:

- *August:* Submit a Letter of Intent and supporting information to the Community Capacity Development Office that includes: crime statistics, preliminary program information and a map of the designated neighborhood. The Letter of Intent must also be co-signed by the applicant and the U.S. Attorney.
- *Mid-October:* Submit the Official Recognition Application to the local U.S. Attorney's Office (USAO) for review.
- *Late-October:* Submit the final Official Recognition Application and the cover letter from the local U.S. Attorney's Office to the Community Capacity Development Office. This can be submitted via e-mail. See <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ccdo/publications.htm#OR2004> for information.
- Funding proposals/applications are due in the late spring, early summer. Once a community receives Official Recognition, it can then apply for Weed and Seed funding. The Official Recognition designation lasts for five years.

Funding Application Process

1. The funding cycle covers a 12-month period. Sites are eligible to receive funds for up to five years, and must complete a continuation application for years two-five.
2. Funding proposals are due in December of each

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year. See <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ccdo/funding.htm> for the Program Guide and Application Kit.

Quick Tips

- ✓ *(Official Recognition)* Most recently, applications were only being accepted for new sites. A proposed location can share one border with a designated area of an existing or expired Weed and Seed site. Check with the Community Capacity Development Office about additional changes before completing the application.
- ✓ *(Official Recognition)* The minimum population size of a designated area is 3000.
- ✓ *(Grant application)* Weed and Seed grant applicants are required to identify other funding sources at a level five times that of the CCDO core funding.

“Other funding” means public or private money or services coming into the targeted neighborhood.

- ✓ *(Grant application)* Specific attention is being paid to first-year sites in rural or federally recognized American Indian/Alaskan Native tribal areas. For the purposes of Weed and Seed designation, “rural” is defined as, “areas/counties that are completely rural or less than 2,500 urban population whether adjacent or not to a metro area. Applicable sites must clearly identify themselves as rural or American Indian/Alaskan Native.”
- ✓ *(Grant application)* Coordination with Project Safe Neighborhoods, an Office of Justice Program’s initiative to reduce gun violence, should be considered in the planning process. See <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/BJA/grants/psnfs.htm> for details.

COALITIONS IN ACTION

The following examples show how partnerships can be creatively formed and solidified. At the foundation of these programs is consistent, thorough and on-going planning—a process that ultimately leads to long-term community change. In each case, the building blocks consist of recognizing a community problem; developing a plan; recruiting the right partners; implementing and refining the plan based on sound evaluation strategies; and seeking new sources of funding to address shifts in scope. These steps comprise the *core competencies for community problem solving*, an evidence-based strategy that has its roots in public health planning. See the sidebar on this page to learn how your coalition can integrate the core competencies.

As readers will see, the four program examples are at various stages of development. The first two have successfully secured Drug-Free Community Support Grants and Weed and Seed funds. The funds have been blended to create comprehensive community programs. The second two are Weed and Seed sites that have most recently either created a formalized substance abuse component or have helped to develop a substance abuse program. In the later cases, funding from DFCSP has not yet been obtained. All examples include an organizational sketch, description of funding streams, a program overview and program outcomes.

CADCA: Building Drug-Free Communities

Core Competencies for Community Problem Solving

Perhaps the number one question that new and established coalitions ask is, “what strategies can help us stay on track?” While there are no easy answers, CADCA’s National Community Anti-Drug Coalition Institute suggests specific approaches or core competencies are based on community programs that address critical health issues, including physical inactivity, low immunization rates and teen pregnancy.

Based on a public health framework, the core competencies represent the discreet steps that move coalitions from problems to solutions:

1. Community Assessment
2. Analyze the Issue or Problem
3. Develop a Strategic Plan
4. Community Action and Intervention
5. Social Marketing of Ideas or Practices/Media Advocacy
6. Evaluation
7. Sustain the Effort

Coalitions can better guarantee success by integrating these proven, evidence-based strategies into program planning and implementation. For information about training go to <http://www.coalitioninstitute.org>.

DRUG-FREE COMMUNITIES SUPPORT PROGRAM & WEED AND SEED: SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

These federal programs have made it possible for hundreds of communities to effectively respond to substance abuse, gang and gun violence and community restoration/re-vitalization needs. Programs at-a-Glance provides coalitions with comparison information.

Programs at-a-Glance

	Drug-Free Communities Support Program	Weed and Seed
Goals and Objectives <i>different</i>	Substance abuse reduction is the primary goal.	Creating a comprehensive community approach to reduce violence, crime and substance abuse is the primary goal.
Audience <i>different</i>	Youth is the primary audience.	The audience is community-determined, but often includes youth.
Program Oversight <i>similar</i>	<p>The community coalition takes the lead.</p> <p><u>Parallel partners:</u> Residents; schools; business community; law enforcement agencies; faith-based and civic/volunteer organizations (including community outreach staff); residents; state, local, and/or tribal governmental agencies with expertise in the field of substance abuse.</p> <p><u>Other partners:</u> Youth; parents; media; youth-serving organizations; healthcare professionals; other organizations involved in reducing substance abuse.</p>	<p>A Steering Committee takes the lead.</p> <p><u>Parallel partners:</u> Residents; schools, private business owners and corporations; law enforcement agencies (including state/federal); faith-based representatives; non-profit and community-based organizations (including community outreach staff), city/county government, including social service agencies.</p> <p><u>Other partners:</u> U.S. Attorney Office; District Attorney's Office; regional directors of federal departments and agencies (HUD, HHS, Small Business Administration, etc.); housing organizations; departments of parks and recreation and other city agencies (housing, code enforcement, etc.); tenant or block organizations; employment and training agencies.</p>
Program parameters <i>similar</i>	The funding cycles are for one year with eligibility of up to five.	The funding cycles are for one year with eligibility of up to five.
Performance measures <i>similar</i>	A comprehensive evaluation plan is required, that includes process and outcome indicators.	A comprehensive evaluation plan is required, that includes process and outcome indicators.

Ocala, Florida Community Council Against Substance Abuse/Ocala Weed and Seed

Organizational Sketch

This community anti-drug coalition incorporated Weed and Seed under its umbrella. The local law enforcement, drug-free schools and other community improvement grants also fall under the management of the coalition.

Overview

In 1990, street crime was up, drive-by shootings were common and there were 16 murders in this Florida community of 8000 residents. There was youth drug abuse (crack and cocaine), violence and plenty of abandoned buildings. Poverty and unemployment were, and remain critical challenges. The Ocala/Marion County

“Once you have success, everyone wants to be a part of the action.”

*— William Patten
Program Director*

*Ocala/Marion County Against Substance Abuse/
Ocala Weed and Seed, Ocala, Florida*

Community Council Against Substance Abuse (CCASA) was already bringing together community leaders to address youth drug abuse and given the scope of the problems experienced in Ocala, Weed and Seed became a critical addition to CCASA's activities.

Ocala, FL's Funding Streams for Substance Abuse/Weed and Seed Activities

Funding source	Focus
<i>Drug-Free Communities Grant</i> from ONDCP and OJJDP	Funds prevention of underage drinking and marijuana use
<i>Ocala Weed and Seed</i> from USDOJ's Community Capacity Development Office	Sustains the comprehensive Weed and Seed Program
<i>Byrne Memorial Trust Fund Grant</i> from the U.S. Department of Justice	Supports drug control and prevention activities
USDOJ's Local Law Enforcement Block Grant (LLEBG)	Funds traditional law enforcement, drug court and prevention activities
<i>Safe and Drug-Free Schools Grant</i> from the U.S. Department of Education	Sustains drop-out prevention, truancy, after-school programs
<i>Workforce Connection Grant</i> from the U.S. Department of Labor	Supports job training activities
<i>Florida Juvenile Justice Title V Grant</i> from the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice	Funds after-school programs with a focus on prevention
City of Ocala, Marion County School Board and Marion County Commission	Supports prevention activities

Weed and Seed expanded the role of police in the community, increasing the number of officers on the street, including intelligence activities and foot and bike patrols. Police officers also participate in community barbecues and other recreation programs. They also attend neighborhood meetings to problem-solve with residents. These strategies personalize law enforcement activities, bridging the gap between weeding and seeding.

Under the CCASA umbrella, Weed and Seed is positioned with other grant programs associated with improving the community (Local Law Enforcement Block Grants, Byrne Grant Funds, Drug-Free Community Grant and the Safe and Drug Free Schools program). This strategy allows for consistent, comprehensive coverage of all efforts that focus on at-risk issues. Additionally, funding is channeled through one entity, making it easier to coordinate efforts. Because these programs are located together, it also provides a simple way for community leaders and residents to access services.

Outcomes

Since receiving Weed and Seed Official Recognition in 1994, Ocala has experienced reductions in: total crime rate down 35 percent, violent crime down 45 percent and property crime down 30 percent. The number of drug arrests increased 148% and crimes with firearms are down 80 percent. “The Weed and Seed program has been a catalyst for huge amounts of change. There has been a 7 percent increase in business/occupational

licenses, homeownership is up, minority college enrollment is up, new home construction is up and unemployment in the target area dropped by more than half—a higher rate of decrease than elsewhere in the city or county,” says William Patten, CCASA and Weed and Seed Director. Abandoned buildings, parks and vacant lots have also been cleaned up and renovated and the neighborhood has recently been designated as a federally-recognized, African-American Historic District. New initiatives include an underage drinking taskforce and an employment program offered through a newly-built Dollar General Store, which trains and places residents into stores and other retail businesses throughout the city and county. The City has recently built a \$1 million Aquatic Center in the community. Additionally, a local community college has built a \$3 million Health Care Educational Center and Dental Clinic in the heart of the Weed and Seed area.

Residents are proud of the community’s progress, and are making sure that the changes continue to happen. In fact, notes William Patten, “No new sidewalk or infrastructure improvement is put into the community without involving the residents first.” Residents know how to gain political support and how and when to engage the press. Doors open when success is evident. In Ocala, once the Weed and Seed efforts took hold, new partners were ready to sign on. “It was almost as if some of our partners, particularly the businesses, were waiting for opportunities to present themselves...,” concludes Patten.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE COUNCIL OF GREATER BATTLE CREEK, MICHIGAN/BATTLE CREEK WEED AND SEED

Organizational Sketch

The police department recruited the local substance abuse coalition to take the lead on organizing a Weed and Seed initiative. While the coalition and Weed and Seed are separate, they are co-located and the substance abuse coalition is the fiscal agent for Weed and Seed.

Overview

Battle Creek, Michigan had its share of open air drug dealing, robberies, breaking and entering, gun violence, poor police-community relations and youth drug/alcohol use. The Battle Creek Police Department took the lead in creating a citizen-driven, Weed and Seed strategy and the Substance Abuse Council of Greater Battle Creek (SAC) was unanimously chosen to develop and

“The Substance Abuse Council (SAC) is more than just a fiscal agent for Battle Creek Weed and Seed—we work together as, ‘one’ and the partnership has strengthened both of us.”

***—Suzanne Nicola Horsfall
Executive Director
Substance Abuse Council of
Greater Battle Creek, Michigan***

implement the program because of its positive reputation in the community.

The Weed and Seed program, which is under the auspice of the Substance Abuse Council, received Official Recognition in 1999. Its vision was to prevent,



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Battle Creek MI's Funding Streams for Substance Abuse/Weed and Seed Activities

Funding source	Focus
<i>Drug Free Communities Grant</i> from ONDCP and OJJDP	Sustains reduction of youth substance abuse and coalition building activities
<i>Battle Creek Weed and Seed</i> from the USDOJ's Community Capacity Development Office	Funds the comprehensive Weed and Seed Program
USDOJ's Local Law Enforcement Block Grant (LLEBG)	Enhances community policing efforts
HUD	Provides police support in the target neighborhood
National Guard	Provides staff support to the Weed and Seed DEFY Camp
<i>State Office of Drug Control Policy Governor's Discretionary Grant</i> from the State of Michigan	Funds the Strengthening Families Program for families in the court system
State Substance Abuse Coordinating Agency	Sustains coalition capacity building; and supports the Prevention Model programs for youth
State Incentive Grant (SIG)	Funds Toward No Drug Use Program for high school students, Communities Mobilizing for Change in Alcohol model program and the county-wide Under Age Drinking Prevention Forum
United Way of Greater Battle Creek	Sustains Youth/Family Drug Prevention programs and other SAC activities
Battle Creek Public Schools	Funds the Alternative High School Prevention Program
Summit Pointe (County Community Mental Health agency)	Provides in-kind space and services for Weed and Seed
Battle Creek Police Department (City of Battle Creek)	Provides technical assistance to the Steering Committee; and funds law enforcement and crime prevention activities, including Project Safe Neighborhoods and the DEFY Camp
Battle Creek Community Foundation	Supports SAC and the Tobacco Prevention Program
U.S. Attorney's Office—Michigan Western Michigan District	Provides technical assistance to the Steering Committee and staff support to DEFY Camp

control and reduce violent crime, drug abuse and gang activities in a targeted, high crime neighborhood of approximately two square miles with a population of 21,000 residents.

Outcomes

The greatest accomplishment of SAC and Weed and Seed is their collaboration. SAC and Weed and Seed are co-located—both receive in-kind services, and are able to leverage resources, resulting in lower overhead costs. As a result, staff can spend more time working with the community. Collaboration doesn't stop on the administrative level—programs are heavily integrated, ensuring that the Police Department, SAC, Weed and Seed, the U.S. Attorney's and the County Prosecutor's Offices are kept engaged. There is a wide variety of interagency programs that focus on issues such as underage drinking, tobacco use reduction, methamphetamine production and use and women within the drug court system. The Eco-Map, a tool that defines

who is being helped, what key players are involved and what other agencies need to be tapped, is used to keep goals and objectives on target. "The Eco-Map is a great tool to evaluate progress over time as we implement multiple strategies over all community sectors. It tells us where we are and where we ought to be," affirms Eric Smith, Weed and Seed Director. SAC/Weed and Seed are also involving residents. In fact, the Weed and Seed's Steering Committee is chaired by a retired community leader and the Weed and Seed Director lives in the community.

"All of the hard work is paying off," says Suzanne Nicola Horsfall, SAC Executive Director. "Interaction between the police department and the community has drastically improved and there are no less than 50 organizations that benefit from the work we do." Most important, crime, gun violence, open air drug trafficking and youth drug use are down and this has enabled the community to begin creating new initiatives.

BUFFALO, NEW YORK'S WEED AND SEED/CALL TO ACTION COLLABORATIVE

Organizational Sketch

This Weed and Seed site's primary goal was to reduce the number of guns and the negative impact of guns on the community. Efforts have been so successful that under the auspice of Weed and Seed, a community anti-drug coalition has been formed to address youth substance abuse and other underlying community problems.

Overview

The presence of guns on the east- and west-side of Buffalo, NY led to drug use which led to gang violence. Neighborhoods of 26,000-28,000 residents, representing a wide range of ethnic groups and cultures, steadily declined, becoming blighted and crime-ridden. The city of Buffalo decided to do something about the problem and received Official Recognition as a Weed and Seed site eight years ago. One of the first things that Weed and Seed Program Coordinator, Oswaldo Mestre, did was to get to know the communities by identifying the active and legitimate businesses and connecting with community leaders and residents. His job was to prove, that with their consolidated support, Weed and Seed could help make the streets, businesses and homes safer.

"The biggest problem affecting our community was guns—with the guns came drugs and with the drugs came gang violence, crime, empty, dilapidated buildings and fear. There was huge public outcry to get the guns off the streets and that's what the community did..."

***— Oswaldo Mestre
Program Coordinator
Weed and Seed/Call to Action Collaborative
Buffalo, New York***

Outcomes

The City of Buffalo instituted a gun abatement program, community policing and targeted law enforcement and over 1500 guns have been removed. Because of Weed and Seed, Buffalo has been the recipient of numerous grants and many more funding proposals are pending. Crime and drug abuse is down, businesses are returning and residents are confident that progress will continue.

In 2003, the Weed and Seed program realized that while key players in the community were engaged, a unified



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approach to substance abuse prevention and intervention was missing. Critical questions were asked—What motivated someone from turning his/her back on gang violence and drug abuse? Why were there abandoned buildings? Why did gangs congregate on street corners? In response, the Call to Action Collaborative

was created. This substance abuse coalition provides Buffalo with a way to apply for Drug-Free Community funding. “The expanded focus on substance abuse prevention and intervention is creating a logical and sequential roadmap—it is truly opening doors that did not exist before,” affirms Oswaldo Mestre.

Buffalo, NY’s Funding Streams for Substance Abuse/Weed and Seed Activities

Funding source	Focus
Buffalo Weed and Seed from USDOJ’s Community Capacity Development Office	Supports the comprehensive Weed and Seed Program
<i>Buffalo Weed and Seed Youth Opportunities Initiative</i> from YO! Buffalo/U.S. Department of Labor	Engages 200 young people in community projects that include neighborhood and park restoration, youth volunteerism, community asset mapping, and job training and workforce development
<i>Donald Dade Greenway Project</i> from United Way of Buffalo and Erie County	Pays for technical assistance, equipment rental and volunteer support for ongoing neighborhood restoration efforts
<i>Inner-City Urban and Community Forestry Project</i> from the NY State Department of Environmental Conservation	Supports targeted neighborhood, community tree planting that will lead to crime prevention and environmental improvements
<i>New York Community Service Grant Program for Buffalo Public School Students</i> from NY State Department of Education	Engages at-risk youth (long-term suspendees) in community service activities

PINE BLUFF, ARKANSAS' INTERESTED CITIZENS FOR VOTER REGISTRATION, INC. /PINE BLUFF WEED AND SEED

Organizational Sketch

The Weed and Seed strategy was initiated by a non-profit voter registration organization that was already addressing community substance abuse, gang issues, crime, hunger, etc. In this case, the Weed and Seed site was supportive in starting Communities Against Drugs Coalition. The site provides planning and training assistance to the coalition, recruits coalition members and serves as a connection between the coalition and youth. Pine Bluff Weed and Seed was also instrumental in getting Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) to Pine Bluff, the first PSN in the state.

“Using a multi-agency approach to law enforcement, crime prevention and neighborhood revitalization, we empower citizens to take back their community. Neighbors are working with neighbors and local police to rid their community of crime, gang activity and drug trafficking and our efforts are making an impact.”

*— Reverend Jesse Turner
Executive Director, ICVR, Inc.
and Program Coordinator of
Pine Bluff Weed and Seed
Pine Bluff, Arkansas*

Pine Bluff's Funding Streams for Substance Abuse/Weed and Seed Activities

Funding source	Focus
Pine Bluff Weed and Seed Program from the USDOJ's Community Capacity Development Office	Funds the comprehensive Weed and Seed Program
Synergy Forum, Inc.	Provides conflict resolution classes during the summer months for youth, ages 8-19. The program is designed to reduce violence and bullying among youth by offering them alternative solutions to problem solving
Tyson Foods, Inc.; Jefferson Regional Medical Center; International Paper Company; Simmons First National Bank, Pine Bluff National Bank, SBC	Funds a week-long community Kingfest program that fosters interracial cooperation and community service; engages students in grades 4-9 to write essays on solving racial problems; and provides college scholarships for graduating seniors
United Water Arkansas, The Mad Butcher, Inc., Planters Cotton Oil Mill, Inc., Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Calpine, Inc.	Encourages youth from five school districts to write essays on stopping gun violence; and supports the “King Team Program,” which teaches leadership skills and teamwork, fosters community service and encourages its 10-19 year-old participants to be drug-free and non-violent
Membership dues, private and community donations	Subsidized a community coalition called Respect for Life Taskforce (reduces homicides); and funds jury pool education, aid for victims of natural disasters, community clean-ups, non-partisan voter education and registration and programs to teach elementary students about nonviolence; also pays for office space and utilities



Working Together, Building Safe and Healthy Communities: Community Capacity Development Office/ Weed and Seed Initiative and Community Anti-Drug Coalitions

Overview

A neighborhood in Pine Bluff, Arkansas was considered crime-and drug-ridden and the use of crack and cocaine was rampant. There were homicides; drugs were being sold on street corners; and in old, abandoned houses, gambling and bootlegging were common. Most tragically, citizens were afraid to talk to the police. In 1998, Interested Citizens for Voter Registration, Inc. (ICVR), a 37-year old, nonpartisan, non-profit organization that has traditionally provided voter education and advocacy, began working with the U.S. Attorney, the City of Pine Bluff and other agencies to reclaim this neighborhood of 3500 residents. ICVR was in a perfect position to spearhead the Weed and Seed program because it was already involved in prevention and intervention activities.

Outcomes

“A great deal of progress has been made since the City of Pine Bluff received Official Recognition in 2001,” says Reverend Jesse Turner, Executive Director of ICVR and Program Coordinator of Pine Bluff Weed and Seed. “Crime decreased by 28 percent in 2003. Businesses are relocating to the community. New banks, housing and schools are being built and streets are being resurfaced. Dilapidated houses are being destroyed and

homeowners are buying permits to rebuild and repair their homes.” The community is also beginning to receive national press—*USA TODAY* Magazine recently honored an ICVR-led effort by featuring articles written by young people grades 4-6 highlighting nonviolent solutions to violent problems.

Much of the success is based on the alliances created through ICVR/Weed and Seed. Partnerships have been forged with the City of Pine Bluff’s law enforcement agencies, educational institutions, community clergy, local department of social services, housing and economic development and other community-based organizations. “We are particularly proud of our new alliances with the health care and faith-based communities and we’ve also been supportive in creating a new substance abuse coalition that will serve our community—the Communities Against Drugs Coalition,” affirms Reverend Turner. ICVR participates in coalition planning meetings and provides technical assistance, particularly on how to work with the faith-based community; recruits perspective coalition members; and communicates with area youth about prevention activities, encouraging them to refrain from abusing alcohol and using illegal drugs.

SUMMARY

Long-term community change is possible, due in-part to the hard work of coalitions. Success depends on creative thinking, resourcefulness and collaboration around issues that are challenging and ever-changing. For coalitions exploring how to sustain community change, the best strategy is to do what coalitions do best—affirm how difficult community needs can be fulfilled by building core competencies—from assessing a community’s problems to pursuing the funding that will help reach proposed goals. The Drug-Free Community Support Program and Weed and Seed provide windows of opportunity for coalitions that want to make a greater impact in their communities. Tips for expanding and combining efforts include:

Program oversight

- ✓ Set up a program management structure that fits the community.

- ✓ Choose a lead agency that has experience in community mobilization.
- ✓ Create cost-saving, seamless service delivery strategies by co-locating under one roof.
- ✓ Partner with existing coalitions in the community to leverage resources, including funding, facilities, overhead, staffing and materials.
- ✓ Use planning tools that will help keep programs on-track.
- ✓ Ensure that the structure allows for ample resident involvement because systemic change becomes more probable by doing so.
- ✓ Incorporate evaluation strategies that document progress and success.

Program goals and objectives

- ✓ Come to consensus on what the community's most critical challenges are and launch activities from this vantage point. Assess the community's readiness on how to effectively address its problems and act accordingly—don't try to launch a program before the community is ready—it just won't work!
- ✓ Unite under one goal. Doing so may allow you to more effectively look at underlying problems later.
- ✓ As the lead agency, gain community support of your efforts before the program is launched. This is accomplished by engaging the residents from the get-go.
- ✓ Develop strong linkages between Weed and Seed and substance abuse prevention programs.

- ✓ Engage faith-based organizations in community revitalization, from drug and violence prevention to employment and housing.
- ✓ Use the media to make your program visible to civic and community leaders.
- ✓ Create opportunities for youth residents to become active in community service.
- ✓ Teach residents how to advocate for changes in the community.

Finally, acknowledge that while partners bring their own philosophies and best practices to the table, the key is to help them see the issues the same way so they can work together. Making relationships work across systems takes time, trust and fortitude.

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Selected Organizations and Federal Agencies

CADCA

Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America

1-800-54-CADCA

<http://cadca.org/>

National Community Anti-Drug Coalition Institute

<http://www.coalitioninstitute.org>

Drug-Free Communities Support Program

<http://drugfreecommunities.samhsa.gov/grantee/grantees.html>

Questions about the DFCSP: Send an e-mail to dfc@samhsa.hhs.gov

National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information (PREVLINe)

www.health.org

Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP)
<http://prevention.samhsa.gov/>

Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT)
<http://csat.samhsa.gov/>

SAMHSA's Faith-Based and Community Programs
www.health.org/initiatives/faithbased

SAMHSA Grant Opportunities
<http://www.samhsa.gov/grants/index.aspx>

Other Federal grant programs:
<http://grants.gov>

U.S. Department of Justice

Office of Weed and Seed

Community Capacity Development Office

202-616-1152

<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ccdo/>

U.S. Department of Labor

Working Partners for an Alcohol- and Drug-Free Workplace Program

<http://www.dol.gov/workingpartners>

Local Coalition Contacts

Battle Creek Weed and Seed/Substance Abuse Council of Greater Buffalo

140 West Michigan Avenue

Battle Creek, MI 49017

Phone: 269-441-6067 or 269-441-5987

E-mail: ees@summitpoint.org

Buffalo Weed and Seed Program

65 Niagra Square

Buffalo, NY 14202-3331

Phone: 716-851-4281

E-mail: omestre@city-buffalo.com



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Communities Against Drugs Coalition
4218 W. 28th
Pine Bluff, AR 71603
Phone: 870-879-4259
<http://www.commresource.org>
E-mail: librown@commresource.org

Community Council Against Substance Abuse/Ocala
Weed and Seed Program
PO Box 1270
Ocala, FL 34478
151 SE Osceola Avenue
Ocala, FL 34478
Phone: 352-629-8231
www.ocalafl.org (click on Departments then
Community Programs)
E-mail: bpatten@ocalafl.org

ICVR, Inc and Pine Bluff Weed and Seed
713 S. Linden Street
PO Box 9257
Pine Bluff, AR 71603-2249
Phone: 870-536-7274
E-mail: PBICVR@aol.com

CADCA® (Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America) is the national membership organization representing coalitions working to make America's communities safe, healthy and drug-free. CADCA's mission is to build and strengthen the capacity of community coalitions by providing technical assistance and training, public policy advocacy, media strategies and marketing programs, conferences, and special events.

This Strategizer is part of a series of publications designed to offer basic information to coalitions about fund-raising, advocacy, evaluation, sustainability and more. Strategizers are downloadable on CADCA's website at <http://cadca.org>.

Contact CADCA for more information about membership, conferences, training and technical assistance.

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